

**ALI IBN ABI TALIB رضي الله عنه: A CONCISE OVERVIEW OF HIS VIRTUES, LIFE AND SERVICES TO ISLAM**

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**ABSTRACT:**

Ali Ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه, whom prophet of Islam has declared as his brother, was the first child to embrace the prophethood of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم who spent rest of his life as very close companion to him and dedicated his life to the cause of Islam becoming the scribe of Holy Quran, a hero of the ghazwat against the mushrikoon and oppressors, conqueror of Khaybar, the fourth caliph of Islam, a great Mujtahid sahabi, an eminence in calligraphy and Arabic linguistics. Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه is one of the brightest stars from the galaxy of companions of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who tirelessly dedicated his every single breath to the glory of the deen of Allah SWT. He carries numerous distinctions and virtues which make him a highly esteemed companion and leader. His marriage with Fatima, the noble daughter of beloved Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم in the second year of hijrah, is one of the most accoladed events which further strengthened his ties with Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم who immensely loved his daughter. With Fatima, he fathered the great Imamain, Hasan and Hussain R.A along with Zainab and Umm Kalthum (May Allah be pleased with them all)<sup>i</sup>. The life of Ali R.A. is a model of purity, honesty, guardianship and astuteness. Though a massive area remained under his control and authority, his humbleness never let any ego or arrogance set in. He lived a simple, ate simple and adopted simplicity in everything he did. His services to Islam are countless and each of his noble services to Islam are cemented in its very foundations. His sacrifices in Mecca, his role in battles of Badar, Uhud, Khaybar to Ahzab, his noble caliphate, and above all, his companionship with our beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم are glaring chapters in the history of Islam. Ali R.A's services to Islam cannot be summed up in a few pages. With this paper, we have aimed to present a few shining aspects from his life. His dignity can simply be understood from the hadith of Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in which he said to Ali R.A.: "You are in the same position with relation to me as Aaron (Harun) was in relation to Moses but with (this explicit difference) that there is no prophet after me"<sup>ii</sup>.

**Keywords:** Uhud, Badar, Khaybar, Ahzab, Asadullah, Zulfikar, Kharaj, sabaite, jahalyia, Rashida

**INTRODUCTION:**

Ali R.A., the fourth caliph of Islam, has offered so many noble services to the cause of Islam and his virtue are so many that volumes and volumes can be written to praise them. Being the first child to accept Islam from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, a great warrior and victorious general, one of the greatest

mujtahid companions, a great jurist and the fourth of the rashidoon caliphs of Islam are some from the glaring virtues of Ali Ibn Abi Talib, May Allah be pleased with him and raise his ranks. Each aspect of the life of this gracious personality is so vivid and full of depth, that numerous channels and academic discussions stem out of it. Each moment of his life was dedicated to glorifying Islam, its preaching and furthering its cause. From being the leader of Muslim Ummah and ruler of a vast land to a humble man grinding flour, each chapter of his life is worth pondering a thousand times. His mercy was so much that even when the assassin attacked him in the mosque of Kufa, Ali directed his sons to provide all facilities to the assassin which are due for any other prisoner. The sixty-three years life of Ali R.A. present a model that can be seen the all the times to come as a true representation of the character we all should aspire to build. He was the true and genuine successor of the other three beloved rashidoon leaders of the Muslims: Abu Bakar, Umar and Othman, May Allah be pleased with them all and raise their ranks.

### HIS VIRTUES:

Sa'd R.A., while explaining **the three great virtues** of Ali R.A., mentioned:

"If I find one of those three things (that made him so virtuous) for me, it would be more dear to me than the red camels. I heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say about 'Ali as he left him behind in one of his campaigns (that was Tabuk). 'Ali said to him: Allah's Messenger, you leave me behind along with women and children. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to him: Aren't you satisfied with being unto me what Aaron was unto Moses but with this exception that there is no prophethood after me. And I (also) heard him say on the Day of Khaibar: I would certainly give this standard to a person who loves Allah and his Messenger, and Allah and his Messenger love him too. He (the narrator) said: We had been anxiously waiting for it, when he (the Holy Prophet) said: Call 'Ali. He was called and his eyes were inflamed. He applied saliva to his eyes and handed over the standard to him, and Allah gave him victory. (The third occasion is this) when the (following) verse was revealed: "Let us summon our children and your children." Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) called 'Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain and said: O Allah, they are my family"<sup>iii</sup>. Ali R.A. is among the 10 noble companions who were given the good news of their place in paradise during their lifetime (Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti & Abdassamad Clarke, 1995, p. 181).

Explaining the matter of flag being given to Ali R.A., Umar Ibn Khattab R.A. mentions:

"Never did I cherish for leadership but on that day. I came before him with the hope that I may be called for this, but Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) called 'Ali b. Abu Talib and he conferred (this honour) upon him and said: Proceed on and do not look about until Allah grants you victory"<sup>iv</sup>.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ wiped off the dust from Ali R.A. lovingly and gave him the name 'Abu Turab' which he loved. Sahl Ibn Sa'd R.A. said: "There was no name dearer to 'Ali than Abu Turab (for it was given to him by the Prophet ﷺ himself) and he felt delighted when he was called by this name. He (the governor of Medina at that time) said to him: Narrate to us the story of his being named as Abu Turab. He said: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) came to the house of Fatima and he did not find 'Ali R.A. in the house; whereupon he said: Where is your uncle's son? She said: (There cropped up something) between me and him which had annoyed him with me. He went out and did not rest here. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) asked a person to find out where he was. He came and said: Allah's Messenger, he is sleeping in the mosque. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) came to him and found him lying in the mosque and

saw that his mantle had slipped from his back and his back was covered with dust and Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) began to wipe it away from him (from the body of 'Ali R.A.) saying: Get up, covered with dust (Abu Turab); get up, covered with dust (فُؤُ أَبَا التُّرَابِ فُؤُ أَبَا التُّرَابِ).<sup>v</sup>

It is narrated by Aishah R.A.:

'A'isha reported that Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) went out one morning wearing a striped cloak of the black camel's hair that there came Hasan b. 'Ali. He wrapped him under it, then came Husain and he wrapped him under it along with the other one (Hasan). Then came Fatima and he took her under it, then came 'Ali and he also took him under it and then said: Allah only desires to take away any uncleanness from you, O people of the household, and purify you (thorough purifying)<sup>vi</sup>.

Ali R.A. was among the companions who washed his body for the funeral and put him in his blessed grave. This is indeed a status that no ordinary person can have. Ali R.A. mentioned that this is what the 'ahl' of a person can do for him:

"Ali, Fadl and Usamah ibn Zayd washed the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and they put him in his grave. Marhab or Ibn AbuMarhab told me that they also made AbdurRahman ibn Awf join them. When Ali became free, he said: The People of the man (*Ahlahu*) serve him."<sup>vii</sup>

Loving him and other blessed companions is an essential requirement of belief of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah. Imam Nasa'i records the narration that 'Ali R.A. said: "The Prophet [ﷺ] made a covenant with me that none would love me but a believer, and none would hate me but a hypocrite."<sup>viii</sup>

#### PARENTS, BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD:

Ali R.A. was a scion of Banu Hashim, the family of Holy Prophet. "His full name was Ali ibn Abi Talib ibn Abdul Mutalib. He was the paternal cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and shared a grandfather with him in Abdul-Mutalib ibn Hakim. His father was Abi Talib, the full brother of Abdullah, the father of the Prophet ﷺ" ("Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA)," 2014). "Before his death, Abdul Mutalib willed for his son Abdul Mutalib to take care of Muhammad ﷺ. Accordingly, he took the Prophet ﷺ under his care when he was very young" (Nadvi, 1991, p. 38; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). Maulana Syed Suleiman Nadvi explains, "Abu Talib was not a very rich man, but he kept his nephew ﷺ dearer to him than his own son". The affection that he developed with his nephew ﷺ did not have any match with any of his other relations. He could never keep Prophet Muhammad ﷺ away from him. Once he was going on for a journey to Syria. When everything got ready and he was about to depart, he became extremely sad thinking that he would have to leave his beloved nephew back home. His heart got filled with emotions and he said that 'By Allah I will take him with me and we will never separate" (Ibn Hisham, 2000, p. 25).

Fatima Bint Asad, Ali R.A.'s mother, was also a lady of great character and nobility. She belonged to the Banu Asad tribe. Like her husband, she also took care of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ like her own son (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). She accepted Islam and migrated to Madina with other Muslims (Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti & Abdassamad Clarke, 1995, p. 181). Upon her death, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave his own shirt as a shroud (Nadvi, 1991, p. 39).

Being born in such a family, Ali R.A.'s love for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was very natural.

Abu Talib R.A. had four sons (Talib, Aqeel, Jafar and Ali R.A.) and two daughters (Umm Hani and Jumana). Ali R.A. was the youngest son (ten years younger than Jafar R.A.). He was born 10 years before the grant of Prophethood to Muhammad ﷺ (Zaheer, 2014). Many Shiites believe that Ali R.A. was born inside the Kaaba, however, the experts of prophetic traditions (Muhaditheen) do not accept this claim and mention Hakeem Ibn Hizam as the one who was born inside the Kaaba (ابن أبي الحديد, 1998).

Love for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was engrained in this family. Talib (Abu Talib's eldest son) used to praise Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his poetry and even though he had not openly accepted Islam, Mushrikeen knew very well who he really admired and praised. He also did not take part in the battle of Badr against the prophet ﷺ and returned back (Nadvi, 1991, p. 42). Other three sons of Abu Talib, including Ali R.A. accepted Islam.

In the times of famine, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Abbas R.A. went to Abu Talib R.A. to assist him through *Kafalah* (adopting and raising his children) in order to reduce his burden. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ took Ali R.A. under his kafalah and Abbas R.A. took Jafar R.A. (Nadvi, 1991, p. 43; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016)

#### ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAM:

After the prophet Muhammad ﷺ was blessed with the prophethood, Ali R.A. saw him and Khadija R.A. offering prayer. He asked him ﷺ about what it was. Prophet ﷺ accordingly explained to him about the message from God. Ali R.A. had this conversation with the prophet ﷺ at night and the very next morning he embraced Islam. Imam Suyuti mentions: "Abu Ya'la narrated that 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said, 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was sent (on his prophetic mission) on Monday and I accepted Islam on Wednesday'. His age when he accepted Islam was ten years old. It has been said that it was nine, eight, and it has even been said that it was less than that. Al-Hasan ibn Zaid ibn al-Hasan said: He didn't ever worship idols, because of his youth" (Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti & Abdassamad Clarke, 1995, p. 182). Since accepting Islam, Ali R.A. never left Prophet ﷺ in thick and thin.

"It was also said that Ali R.A. was the first person to embrace Islam, but the correct view is that he was only the first boy to do so. The same applied to Khadeejah R.A. who was the first woman to embrace Islam; Zayd Ibn Al-Harith was the first slave to become a Muslim, and Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq was the first freeman to believe in the message of Islam" (Muhammad & Al-Yazid, 2001, p. 322). It was narrated that "Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "I was the first person to embrace Islam", but the chain of narrators mentioned for this hadith was not correct.

Ali R.A. used to accompany Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in prayers. One day Abu Talib found his nephew and son offering the prayers. He asked Prophet Muhammad about what was the religion he was following. He explained to him that this is the religion of Allah, the religion of His Angels, the religion of His Messengers and religion of our father Ibrahim, May Allah's peace be upon him. Abu Talib said that I cannot leave the religion of my elders but till the time I am alive, I will not let anyone cause you any harm. He then asked his son about what he was doing. Ali R.A. explained that he has accepted the religion of Muhammad ﷺ. Listening to this, narrators believe that Abu Talib responded by saying that he should continue to follow the Prophet ﷺ as he only calls towards the good (Nadvi, 1991, pp. 54–55). Islamic Encyclopedia mentions Abu Talib in following words: "A true man of a true

character, he stood by the Prophet ﷺ, without declaring faith in him, but bore, what sworn friends and protectors cannot normally bear.” (Zaheer, 2014)

The history of Islam is strewn with examples of Ali's commitment to the cause of Islam and to Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him. When Prophet Muhammad called a meeting of his tribesman to explain the new faith and his position in it, he asked pointedly who would support him. When all those present grew quiet, Ali, even though he was a young boy, stood up and pledged his support (Professor Masud-ul-Hasan, 1982a; Zaheer, 2014).

#### SERVICES TO ISLAM IN MECCA:

Ali R.A. used to facilitate the ones who used to come to Mecca in search of truth. He used to guide them to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah had granted him special wisdom and understanding to handle this task. His role in Abu Dharr Ghiffari's acceptance of Islam has been recorded by Imam Bukhari. Details are as follows:

Narrated Abu Jamra: Ibn `Abbas radhiallahu `anhu said to us, 'Shall I tell you the story of Abu Dharr's conversion to Islam?' We said, 'Yes'. He said, "Abu Dharr said: I was a man from the tribe of Ghifar. We heard that a man had appeared in Makkah claiming to be a Prophet. I said to my brother, 'Go talk to that man and talk to him and bring me his news.' He set out, met him and returned. I asked him, 'What is the news with you?' He said, 'By Allah, I saw a man enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.' I said to him, 'You have not satisfied me with this information.' So, I took a waterskin and a stick and proceeded towards Makkah. Neither did I know him (i.e. the Prophet ), nor did I like to ask anyone about him. I kept on drinking zam zam water and staying in the Mosque (Masjid Al Haraam). Then `Ali radhiallahu `anhu passed by me and said, 'It seems you are a stranger?' I said, 'Yes.' He proceeded to his house and I accompanied him. Neither did he ask me anything, nor did I tell him anything. The next morning, I went to the Mosque to ask about the Prophet but no-one told me anything about him. `Ali passed by me again and asked, 'Hasn't the man recognized his dwelling place yet?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'Come along with me.' He asked me, 'What is your business? What has brought you to this town?' I said to him, 'If you keep my secret, I will tell you.' He said, 'I will do.' I said to him, 'We have heard that a person has appeared here, claiming to be a Prophet. I sent my brother to speak to him and when he returned, he did not bring a satisfactory report; so I thought of meeting him personally.' `Ali said (to Abu Dharr), 'You have reached your goal; I am going to him just now, so follow me, and wherever I enter, enter after me. If I should see someone who may cause you trouble, I will stand near a wall pretending to mend my shoes (as a warning), and you should go away then.' `Ali proceeded and I accompanied him till he entered a place, and I entered with him to the Prophet ﷺ to whom I said, 'Present (the principles of) Islam to me.' When he did, I embraced Islam immediately (Nadvi, 1991, pp. 56–57; "Story of the Conversion of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari - Sahih Bukhari," 2009).

According to a narration mentioned in Musnad Ahmed, Mustadrak Hakim, Sunan Nasa'i and Musnad Abi Ya'ala, once Prophet ﷺ and Ali R.A. went to Masjid Al-Haraam. Prophet ﷺ asked him to sit down. He then stood on his shoulders to reach the roof of Kaaba. Realizing Ali R.A.'s weakness, Prophet ﷺ asked him to sit down. He then asked him to stand on his own blessed shoulders. Ali R.A. mentions

that he felt as if his height was reaching the skies at that time. He grabbed an idol from the roof of Kaaba and threw it away (Khalid, 2014, p. 40; Nadvi, 1991, p. 57).

About the night of hijrah of Prophet ﷺ, Imam Suyuti mentions: "When he (the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace) told Ali R.A. to remain some days behind after him in Makkah, in order to repay some things entrusted to and deposited with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and for him then to join his family, he did that" (Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti & Abdassamad Clarke, 1995, p. 182). Before Prophet ﷺ left, Allah SWT made him aware of plans of Quresh to come and try to kill him. Prophet ﷺ asked Ali R.A. to sleep in his bed and informed him that they will not be able to harm him at all. Ali R.A. took a handful of dust with him and left his house reciting verses from Surah Yaseen. He threw that dust on the heads of Mushrikoon who could not see Prophet Muhammad ﷺ leaving due to the shield that Allah created for His prophet ﷺ. A passer-by asked this group about who were they waiting for. They said that they were waiting for Muhammad ﷺ. They looked inside the house and seeing Ali R.A. they thought that Prophet ﷺ had not left. In the morning, Ali R.A. woke up from the bed and showed his identity (Nadvi, 1991, p. 60). Ali R.A. stayed in Makkah for three days after this.

**Note:** *There is a difference of opinion among the Muhaditheen regarding the authenticity of narrations related to Ali R.A. sleeping in Prophet's bed. Some consider them 'Hasan' (lesser than Saheeh but still considered as applicable and authentic inshaAllah) whereas some consider them 'daiif' (weak). Wallahu Aalim. As it is neither related to a matter of Aqeedah nor with an act of worship, there may be leniency in its acceptance in accordance with the following:*

- *There are three conditions that must be fulfilled in order to use the weak Hadith. These conditions are laid down by Imam al Hafidh Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani. 1- The weakness shouldn't be severe. 2- The weak Hadith should be used under already well-established principles (and should not bring in ideas of its own). 3- When a weak Hadith is used (after it fulfills the above two conditions), it should not be firmly believed to be said by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (peace be upon him), [lest we refer to him (peace be upon him) that which he did not say].<sup>ix</sup>*
- *It is reported that Ibn Abi Hatim said, he heard from Abi Ubdah who said, It was said to Abdullah Ibn Mubarak that A man narrated a (certain) hadith and he (ibn Mubarak) was told that the narrator is weak. Ibn Mubarak said, " One may narrate such narrations from [a weak narrator]. Ubdah asked him, " 'Such narrations' like? Ibn Mubarak said , " (those narrations pertaining to) Good conduct*
- *(adab), admonition (maw'iza), and Asceticism (zuhd).<sup>ix</sup>*
- *Similar opinion (i.e. use of weak ahadith in the case of Fadha'il Amaal) is also reported from Suyuti who quotes a consensus on this<sup>xi</sup>.*

#### **MIGRATION TO MEDINA:**

Three days after the Prophet ﷺ, Ali R.A. went to Madina using his the same path that he followed. He reached the neighbourhood of Bani Amr' Ibn Awf where Prophet ﷺ was present at the place of Kalthum Ibn Al-Hadam. By that time, Ali R.A.'s feet were torn because of excessive walking. Prophet ﷺ was informed that Ali R.A. cannot walk. He ﷺ went to see him. He started weeping seeing the condition of Ali's feet. Ali R.A. was in pain covered with blisters. The noble prophet applied his



sanctified saliva on Ali's sores. As all those present witnessed a miracle in the making, Ali R.A.'s feet were healed instantly. He never had problems with his feet for the rest of his life. (Haylamaz, 2015)

"The emigrants from Makkah were not to adjust themselves to the changed physical environments alone, they had to adjust themselves to changed social environments as well. To bring about such adjustment and rehabilitation the Holy Prophet established a fraternity among the Muslims from Makkah and those of Madina whereunder each emigrant was paired with a resident of Madina of the corresponding status. For their selflessness and help in the rehabilitation of the emigrants from Makkah in the society of Madina, the Madinites came to be known as 'Ansars' - helpers. The brotherhood that was established in Madina during this period shows to what heights men can rise when they are motivated by some noble purpose. The bonds established as a consequence of this brotherhood surpassed the ties of blood relationship" (Professor Masud-ul-Hasan, 1982b).

*Note: According to the accounts that have come down to us the Holy Prophet paired all emigrants except Ali with the Ansar. According to some traditions quoted by Arman Sarhadi in his book Ali b Abu Talib, Ali felt great disappointment in being passed over in the process of pairing. It is stated that Ali went weeping to his house where he was consoled by his wife Fatima. Later the Holy Prophet paired Ali with himself (Haylamaz, 2015) declaring him his ﷺ brother in this world and the hereafter. It is difficult to believe in the veracity of this tradition. By this time Ali was still unmarried, and it is prima facie untrue that his wife Fatima consoled him. Ali was a man of great courage who could face any ordeal, and he was not the man to weep because he was not paired with any Ansar. At this time Ali was a member of the family of the Holy Prophet. Ali had not acquired an independent identity of his own so far apart from being a member of the family of the Holy Prophet and the question of pairing him with any Ansar did not arise (Professor Masud-ul-Hasan, 1982b).*

It was Ali R.A. who suggested to Umar R.A. during his Khilafah for the Hijra to be made as the beginning of the Islamic year with Moharram as its first month. Consequently, Caliph Omar in 21 A.H. or 641 A.D introduced the Islamic calendar in its present form (Dr. Abdus Sattar Ghazali, 2000).

#### **MARRIAGE WITH FATIMA :**

Ali became the Prophet's ﷺ son-in-law when he married Fatimah after the Battle of Badr<sup>1</sup>. On the thirteenth Year of ascendancy to the office of prophethood, Muhammad ﷺ knotted his beloved daughter in marriage with Ali. Fatima R.A. was from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's first beloved wife, Khadija (RA) and he ﷺ had a strong affiliation with her. Hassan and Hussain R.A. were the sons of Fatima and Ali, whom Prophet ﷺ has decorated with the title as leader of youth in paradise<sup>xii</sup>. "Fatima was the only daughter of the Prophet who had children and hence her descendants came to be regarded as the progeny of the Prophet" (Nadwi, 1991).

It is reported that Ali R.A. went forward to take marriage proposal for Fatimah R.A. to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ but in the presence of the Prophet, he became over-awed and tongue-tied. He stared at the ground and could not say anything. The Prophet then asked: "Why have you come? Do you need something?" Ali still could not speak and then the Prophet suggested: "Perhaps you have come

<sup>1</sup> According to some narrations, the nikah was done after the the battle of Uhud. Sheikh Syed Abul Hasan Nadvi has explained the weakness in such narrations in text and isnad. Shah Muhadith Dahelvi was also of the same opinion (Nadvi, 1991, p. 65).

to propose marriage to Fatimah." "Yes," replied Ali. At this, according to one report, the Prophet said simply: "Marhaban wa ahlān - Welcome into the family," and this was taken by Ali and a group of Ansar who were waiting outside for him as indicating the Prophet's approval.

Another report indicated that the Prophet approved and went on to ask Ali if he had anything to give as mahr. Ali replied that he didn't. The Prophet reminded him that he had a shield which could be sold. Ali sold the shield to Uthman for four hundred dirhams and as he was hurrying back to the Prophet to hand over the sum as mahr, Uthman stopped him and said: "I am returning your shield to you as a present from me on your marriage to Fatimah." Fatimah and Ali were thus married most probably at the beginning of the second year after the Hijrah. She was about nineteen years old at the time and Ali was about twenty-one. The Prophet himself performed the marriage ceremony. At the walimah, the guests were served with dates, figs and hais ( a mixture of dates and butter fat). A leading member of the Ansar donated a ram and others made offerings of grain. All Madinah rejoiced.

"Abu Bakr had taken up the responsibility of purchasing the articles given to Fatima as her dowry. Similarly, A'isha and Umm Salma had lent assistance to 'Ali in cleaning and preparing his house for the marriage" (Nadwi, 1991).

Secondly, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him & give him peace) gave his beloved daughter a silver bracelet, two Yemeni sheets, four mattresses, one blanket, one pillow, one cup, one hand-grinding mill, one bedstead, a small water skin and a leather pitcher (Mufti Muhammad ibn Adam, 2012).

Fatimah left the home of her beloved father for the first time to begin life with her husband. The Prophet was clearly anxious on her account and sent Barakah with her should she be in need of any help. And no doubt Barakah was a source of comfort and solace to her. The Prophet prayed for them: "O Lord, bless them both, bless their house and bless their offspring." In Ali's humble dwelling, there was only a sheepskin for a bed. In the morning after the wedding night, the Prophet went to Ali's house and knocked on the door. Barakah came out and the Prophet said to her: "O Umm Ayman, call my brother for me."

"Your brother? That's the one who married your daughter?" asked Barakah somewhat incredulously as if to say: Why should the Prophet call Ali his "brother"? (He referred to Ali as his brother because just as pairs of Muslims were joined in brotherhood after the Hijrah, so the Prophet and Ali were linked as "brothers".)

The Prophet repeated what he had said in a louder voice. Ali came and the Prophet made a du'a, invoking the blessings of God on him. Then he asked for Fatimah. She came almost cringing with a mixture of awe and shyness and the Prophet said to her: "I have married you to the dearest of my family to me." In this way, he sought to reassure her. She was not starting life with a complete stranger but with one who had grown up in the same household, who was among the first to become a Muslim at a tender age, who was known for his courage, bravery and virtue, and whom the Prophet described as his "brother in this world and the hereafter".

This blessed marriage lasted for 10 years till the death of Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her and raise her ranks. Ali R.A. did not marry another woman while Fatimah R.A. was alive.



Despite his own family suffering with hunger, Ali R.A. was more concerned about the hunger of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his family. Once he came to know about that Prophet ﷺ did not have anything to eat. Upon hearing this, he left off to find some work so that he could buy some food for the Prophet ﷺ. While searching for work, he reached the garden of Jew. That man offered him one date as a reward for pulling a bucket of water. Ali R.A. pulled 17 buckets and as reward collected 17 Ajwa dates. He presented those dates to Prophet ﷺ who then asked him if it was the love of Allah and His messenger ﷺ that prompted him to do that? Ali R.A. affirmed. Prophet ﷺ explained that there is no one who loves Allah and His messenger ﷺ and poverty doesn't come his way in such a manner. He, therefore, advised for all true lovers to prepare their shields for this. The Arabic words used *تجففا* is basically used for protective clothing that humans or horses wear to protect themselves from the weapons and hits. True lovers should accordingly make themselves strong and prepared like that (Nadvi, 1991, p. 70).

### ALI IN BATTLEFIELDS:

In keeping to the brevity of this article, we set below some of the key battles:

- The Battle of Badr was won by the Muslims despite them being outnumbered and ill-equipped as compared to their opponents. At the start of the battle, the pagans requested for individual combat between heroes of the two armies. Ali was among the two emigrants who stepped up and killed his opponent. Once the battle had begun, Ali known to possess courage and exceptional skill in combat, killed several of the pagan heroes with several prisoners of war in tow.
- The Battle of Uhud in Shawwal 3 A.H. was a major loss for the Muslims. However, Ali's heroism was evident as he killed many of the polytheists and strived to defend the Prophet ﷺ. He saved him from harm, receiving sixteen blows as he protected him and after the battle, treated the Prophet's ﷺ wounds to ensure his recovery.
- After the battle, Ali and the other Muslims accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to the fortress of Bani Quraithah. They battled the Jews who had previously cheated the Muslims. In this campaign, Ali carried the banner of the Messenger of Allah, fearless and their every intention of defending the religion, he had said, "By Allah, I shall go through what Hamzah went through (meaning martyrdom), or I shall breach their Fortresses." It was victory for the Muslims, one that highlights their unwavering faith in the defence of the religion, willingness and courage to fight for their cause.
- The Prophet ﷺ had wanted to perform the Umrah and wanted it be known to the Quraish that he came in peace. He assigned Ali to draft the agreement. However when the polytheists of Quraish insisted the erasure of the words "Messenger of Allah", Ali refused to comply. His love and veneration for the Messenger ﷺ were evident. The Prophet ﷺ himself erased those words for he was adamant in creating a peaceful treaty, The Treaty of Hudaibiya.
- The campaign to Khaybar in 7 A.H. was deemed as a conquest of a strategic Jewish military colony which was their last foothold in the Arabian Peninsula that also served as an observation post for them in eyeing the activities of the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ started besieging the fortresses of Khaybar and conquered them one by one. It is narrated by Sahl R.A., as mentioned in Sahih Bukhari: "On the day (of the battle) of Khaibar the Prophet said, "Tomorrow I will give the flag to somebody who will be given victory (by Allah) and who

loves Allah and His Apostle and is loved by Allah and His Apostle." So, the people wondered all that night as to who would receive the flag and in the morning everyone hoped that he would be that person. Allah's Apostle asked, "Where is 'Ali?" He was told that 'Ali was suffering from eye-trouble, so he applied saliva to his eyes and invoked Allah to cure him. He at once got cured as if he had no ailment. The Prophet gave him the flag. 'Ali said, "Should I fight them till they become like us (i.e. Muslim)?" The Prophet said, "Go to them patiently and calmly till you enter the land. Then, invite them to Islam, and inform them what is enjoined upon them, for, by Allah, if Allah gives guidance to somebody through you, it is better for you than possessing red camels." In this difficult battle with the Jews, he challenged the leader named Merhab and killed him, thus conquering the town.

- Conquered Mecca as pagans had broken their covenants. Ali commandeered one wing of the army, entered the city peacefully and proceeded to destroy the stone idols.
- In 9 Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ led an army to Tabruk to the northern border of Arabia to deter the Romans who were trying to destroy the Islamic State. He left Ali to be the ruler of Medina in his absence. Ali was not satisfied because he wanted to join the Prophet ﷺ in battle and felt the shame at being left behind. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Do you not like to be to me like Harun was to Musa?" It was only upon hearing this analogy, Ali was then satisfied.
- When the Prophet ﷺ sent the Muslims to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Prophet ﷺ sent Ali to read a proclamation, "No idolater shall after this year perform pilgrimage. No one shall run around the Ka'bah naked. Who has a treaty with the Prophet ﷺ it shall continue binding till its end. For the rest, four months are allowed to every man to return to his territory, after which there will exist no obligations on the Prophet ﷺ except to war to those people with whom treaties have been made."
- In the 10th year of Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ sent Ali to preach Islam to the people of Yemen. It was a very successful campaign for the entire Hamadhan tribe accepted Islam.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE:

A numerous range of discipline from theology and exegesis and from law to Arabic grammar and Rhetoric are regarded as having been first adumbrated by Ali.

The scholars of seerah (Prophet's biography) have mentioned the names of the Sahabah who used to write down the wahy (revelation) or the letters of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). They were: Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam, 'Aamir ibn Fuhayrah, 'Amr ibn al-'Aas, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, 'Abd-Allaah ibn al-Arqam, Thaabit ibn Qays ibn Shammaas, Hanzalah ibn al-Rabee' al-Usaydi, al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, 'Abd-Allaah ibn Rawaahah, Khaalid ibn al-Waleed, Khaalid ibn Sa'eed ibn al-'Aas (whom it was said was the first one to write down anything for him), Mu'aawiyah ibn Abi Sufyaan and Zayd ibn Thaabit. He requested them to do that and allocated this task to them (al-Munajjid, 2002).

He was highly admired for his understanding of religion. Abu Juhaifah (RAA) narrated, 'I asked 'Ali: 'Do you have any other Divine Revelation besides what is in the Qur'an?' 'Ali said, 'No. By Him Who made the grain split (germinate) and created the soul, we have nothing besides the Qur'an except the gift of understanding the Qur'an, which Allah gives a man, besides what is written in this manuscript.'"<sup>xiii</sup>

“There are a lot of sayings narrated by ‘Ali (R.A.) on the exegesis of the Glorious Qur’an which are mentioned in detail in the book *At-Tafseer Al-Mumad Bi Asaaneedihi*. Ibn Sa’ad reports that ‘Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, said: ‘By Allah, no verse was revealed without my knowing the reason for its revelation, where it was revealed, and the person who was the caused of its revelation; indeed my Lord has granted me sound memory, mind, and honesty of speech’. On the authority of Ibn Sa’d and others who report that Abu At-Tufayl said that ‘Ali (R.A.) stated: ‘Ask me anything about Allah’s Book, for I know everything about the verses therein: that is, those were revealed during the day and night, and the verses that were sent to the Prophet ﷺ while he was on mountains” (Muhammad & Al-Yazid, 2001, p. 327).

He was not only one of the most knowledgeable exegesists but also an excellent memorizer of hadith. “He related five hundred and eighty-six hadith from the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah bless him and his family and grant them peace.” (Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti & Abdassamad Clarke, 1995, p. 183)

Ali R.A was also a great scholar of Arabic language literature and he is considered to be a pioneer in the field of Arabic grammar (Nahv) and rhetoric /Balaghah (Maulana Muhammad Jameel, 2011, p. 19). Had these fields not being there, it would have been very difficult to interpret the correct meaning of Quran and Sunnah. It was because of the mistakes that people with lesser knowledge started to do that companions of the blessed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ initiated and emphasized the field of Arabic Nahv.

Mufti Atta ur Rahman Multani quote the following in his book “Kashifah”, the Sharh of Nahv book ‘Kafiah (Mufti Atta ur Rahman Multani, 2000, pp. 7–8):

- Abul Aswad Duwaili mentions that once he went to see Ali R.A. and found him very worried. Ali R.A. mentioned that he saw someone speaking incorrectly. Based on this, he showed his intent to write a book on usools (fundamentals) of the Arabic language. When he (Abul Aswad) came back after a few days, Ali R.A. gave him a book which contained rules and Nahv. A similar case is narrated about Umar R.A. as well who saw a person interpreting a Quranic verse incorrectly. He accordingly advised Abul Aswad to compile laws of the language.
- Similarly, someone spoke wrongly in front of Muaviyyah R.A. When Ali R.A. came to know about this, he wrote two chapters on Nahv to correct the mistake that was observed.

With regards to the eloquence of Ali R.A., Mufti Yusuf Moosagie explains that his style of writing was so majestic that it cannot be surpassed. His phrases are exemplary in wisdom and his expressions are filled with beauty and strength. It is mentioned that besides Nabi ﷺ we cannot find anyone more eloquent in Arabic than Ali R.A. There was none who was as articulate and well-spoken as him. The fluids of eloquence flowed from his tongue and his writings were filled with insightful and strong proofs. It is unanimously agreed that he was one of the greatest orators and writers (Mufti Yusuf Moosagie, 2015). Numerous short sayings of Ali R.A. have become part of general Islamic culture and are quoted as aphorisms and proverbs in daily life. They have also become the basis of literary works or have been integrated into poetic verses in many languages.

#### **ALI’S RELATIONS WITH OTHER RIGHTLY GUIDES CALIPHS:**

There are numerous events and incidents that show us the mutual love and respect they had for each other. Some of these are summarized below:

- A strict follower of the Prophetic ways, `Ali even tried to imitate `Umar . When suggested that he alight into the “White Palaces” of the former Persian rulers of Iraq, he refused on grounds that earlier to him, `Umar had rejected the suggestion to alight therein (Zaheer, 2014).
- Umm Kulthum was the second daughter of `Ali and Fatimah, and the youngest of their four children. She was born in about the year 6 AH. She became of marriageable age during the khilafah of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, and the khalifah asked for her hand in marriage. `Ali said, “I had kept my daughters for the sons of Ja’far.” `Umar said, “Marry her to me, O Abul Hasan, for by Allah, there is no man on the face of the earth who seeks to achieve through her good companionship that which I seek to achieve.” `Ali said, “I have done so.” Then `Umar came to the Muhajiroon between the grave [of Rasoolullaah (s.a.w.s)] and the pulpit. They—`Ali, `Uthman, Zubayr, Talhah and `Abd ar-Rahman—used to sit there, and whenever a matter used to arrive from the frontiers, `Umar used to come to them there and consult with them. He came to them and said, “Congratulate me.” They congratulated him, and asked, “With whom are we congratulating you, O Ameer al-Mu’minin?” He replied, “With the daughter of `Ali ibn Abi Talib.” Then he related to them that the Nabi said, “Every tie of kinship, and every association will be cut off on the Day of Qiyamah, except my kinship and my association.” [‘Umar said,] “I have had the companionship of Rasoolullaah (s.a.w.s); I would like also to have this [kinship]” (Ibn Saad, 1990, p. 338). The marriage of Umm Kulthum has been unanimously accepted as a fact of history by all major biographers and historians. Its authenticity has never been contested by anyone—not even the staunchest Shi’ah—during the first four centuries after the Hijrah. It was only during the fifth century that ash-Shaykh al-Mufid (died 413 AH) appears to have woken up to the threat that the acceptance of this marriage holds for the doctrine of the Shi’ah and their particular view of history.
- Maulana Imdad ul Hasan Nomani explains that, for the marriage between Ali R.A. and Fatima R.A., Prophet ﷺ made Abu Bakr and Umar witnesses (Nomani, 2015).
- Three of Ali R.A.’s sons were named as Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman
- Ali R.A.’s sons followed in his footsteps; both Al Hasan and Husayn had sons named Abu Bakr. This was mentioned by Al Yaqoobi and Al Masoodi, who were both Shia historians.<sup>xiv</sup>
- Asma bint Umayy R.A. had been the wife of Jafar ibn Abi Talib R.A., the brother of Ali R.A.; After Jafar R.A. died, she married Abu Bakr and bore him a son whom he called Muhammad. Ali R.A. appointed him as the governor of Egypt. When Abu Bakr died, Ali Ibn Abi Talib R.A. married her and she bore him a son whom he called Yahya.<sup>xv</sup>
- Also another sign of love and friendship between Abu Bakr and Ahl Al Bayt was that the granddaughter of Abu Bakr (r) was married to Muhammad Al Baqir, the grandson of Ali, who is considered the fifth Imam by the Shias. Professor Ehsaan Elahi Zaheer quoted from the books of the shia themselves, proof of the connection and ties through marriage that existed between the family of Abu Bakr and Ali. Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr – the grandson of Abu Bakr and Ali ibn Al Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib were maternal cousins. i.e Muhammad’s and Al Husayn’s wives were sisters. They were the female prisoners captured at the time of Umar; they were the daughters of Yazdagrid ibn Shahriyar and the granddaughters of Chosroes. Professor Zaheer discussed this issue in detail in order to prove

ties through marriage and the love and friendship that existed between Abu Bakr and Ahl al Bayt (As explained in his book "Ash Shiah Wa Ahl al Bayt"). All of these ties of marriage prove the bond of love respect and friendship that existed between Abu Bakr and Ali and their descendants.

- Near the days of assassination of Uthman R.A., a group of armed rebels marched to Medina and was met by Ali ibn Abi Talib at the outskirts, who explained the gravity of the error and the falsehood of the rumours to them. The plea fell on deaf ears, and they went ahead to confront Uthman and put his household under a long siege. Ali bin Abi Talib sent his sons Al-Hasan and Al-Husain along with several others to defend Uthman (Khan, 2014; Hadith of the Day, 2012).
- Baqir Majlisi, a Twelver Shia theologian explains the role of Abu Bakr and Umar in the marriage of Ali with Fatima. This, unfortunately, is seldom explained by contemporary shias to their followers in order to deceive them into hating the noble companions of messenger of Allah ﷺ. Baqir Majlisi explains: "Next day, Abu Bakr, Umar and Saad bin Muadh were sitting in the masjid Nabwi. Abu Bakr said that the nobles of Quraish asked the Prophet ﷺ about the hand of Fatima (i.e they wanted to marry her), he replied that the matter of Fatima is with Allah, whomever He wills, He will marry her to him." And Ali hasn't talked to the Prophet ﷺ about this, and in my opinion, nothing is stopping Ali except poverty. Then Abu Bakr said to Umar and Muadh, stand up and let's go to Ali and convince him for asking the hand of Fatima R.A., if poverty is stopping him, then we shall help him. Saad said, "You are absolutely correct O Abu Bakr". So they stood up and then went to Ali. Ali was not present at his home, He had gone to the garden of an Ansari to water it for wages. They reached there, Ali inquired the reason for their coming, upon which Abu Bakr said "You have excelled others in good deeds and you are close to the Prophet ﷺ also, what is prohibiting you from asking the hand of Fatima. When Ali heard this, his eyes filled with tears. He said "Who doesn't want to marry Fatima? But due to poverty, I feel shy to express my sentiments." So they convinced him for this matter and he agreed to go to the Prophet ﷺ. Ali came back to his home, and then went towards the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>xvi</sup>
- Uthman R.A. was the one who assisted Ali R.A. in managing his Mahr for Fatimah R.A. and bearing other expenses. When Ali married Fatimah R.A., Uthman R.A. bought Ali R.A.'s armor for five hundred dirhams. Four hundred was set aside as mahr (dower) for Fatimah R.A.'s marriage, leaving a hundred for all other expenses. Later Uthman R.A. presented the armor back to Ali R.A. as a wedding present (Rogerson, 2006). This way, Ali R.A. got the money as well his armor back. Such was the love between these blessed companions<sup>xvii</sup>.
- Masruq narrates from Aisha (Prophet ﷺ wife and Abu Bakr R.A.'s daughter) and Umm Salma that they said that the Prophet (s) ordered them to make preparations for Fatima's going to Ali. So we brought mud from the valley of Batha, then prepared the home, and cleaned it. Then we made two cushions with our hands. Then prepared food with dates and munqa, and arranged drinkable water. Then we placed a wood in the corner of the house so that clothes and water vessels can be hanged on it. Aisha and Umm Salma narrates that they didn't see any better marriage than the marriage of Fatima (Ibn Maja, Kitabun Nikah, Babul Walima). Tusi in his 'Amali' has narrated a similar tradition that the Prophet ﷺ ordered his wives to decorate the house for Fatima, which they did.<sup>xviii</sup>
- Al-Husayn ibn 'Ali (radhiallahu 'anhu) mentioned that: "'Umar said to me on day, 'O my son, why don't you come and join us sometimes?' So I came one day but he was alone with

Mu'awiyah and Ibn 'Umar was at the door but was not granted admittance, so I went back. He met me after that and said, 'O my son, did I not see you coming to us?' I said, 'I came but you were alone with Mu'awiyah, and I saw Ibn 'Umar come back, so I came back.' He said, 'You have more right to be given permission to enter than 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, for all the blessings we have, as you can see, are caused by Allah, then you (i.e., Ahlul-Bayt),' and he laid his hand on my head."<sup>ix</sup>

- The scholar Shibli an-Nu'mani said in his book *Al-Faruq*, under the heading, "Rights and Etiquette Between the Family and the Companions (of the Prophet)" that 'Umar did not make any decision about any serious matter without consulting 'Ali, who used to advise him with all sincerity. When he travelled to Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), he appointed 'Ali in charge of matters of the caliphate in Madinah. Throughout the life of 'Umar, 'Ali was a sincere advisor who feared for 'Umar's life. 'Umar loved 'Ali and there was deep affection and mutual trust between them. Yet despite that some people still insist on distorting history and narrating reports that suit them and their whims and desires, so as to give us a picture of the rightly guided Caliphs which suggests they were all plotting against one another and all their affairs were run from behind the scenes (Dr. 'Ali Muhammad as-Salabi, 2007).
- Imam Ibn Kathir mentions that When Uthman R.A. was martyred, Ali R.A. came to Uthman R.A. and fell on him and wept, so much that it seemed as he has joined him (i.e he has also passed away)<sup>xx</sup>. Al-Baladhari quoted in the 'Lineages of the Nobles' from al-Mada'ini from Salama b. 'Uthman from 'Ali b. Zayd from al-Hasan. He said, "'Ali came in one day to his daughters and they were wiping their eyes. He said, 'Why are you weeping?' They said, 'We are weeping for 'Uthman.' He wept and said, 'Weep then.'"<sup>xxi</sup>
- Shia book states: When 'Uthman was murdered, he was sitting reading from the Quran. His wife jumped up and began to scream, "They have killed the Emir of the Believers!" Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn came running but found 'Uthman had already passed away, and they began to weep. 'Ali, Talhah, Az-Zubayr, Sa'd, and other Muslims from the Muhajirun and the Ansar (Supporters) were informed about that, and when 'Ali arrived at 'Uthman's house, he was driven to distraction with grief. He said to Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn, "How come that the Emir of the Believers was killed while you were guarding his door?" Then he slapped Al-Hasan on the face, struck Al-Husayn in the chest, and sharply reproached Muhammad Ibn Talhah and 'Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubayr.<sup>xxii</sup>

#### CALIPHATE:

With the departure of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the office of Islamic caliphate came into existence. Abu Bakar R.A. became the first caliph of Islam followed by Umar, Othman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all) – the four rashidun (rightly guided caliphs according to Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah). These noble companions of Holy Prophet ﷺ did an outstanding job in furthering his mission of connecting mankind to its Creator through the bond of brotherhood that Islam brought to humanity. During the caliphate of first three rashidun caliphs, Ali R.A. remained a tower of support and assistance for them. Ali was the member of their Consultative body (Shura).

Ali (R.A.) took a pledge of loyalty on the hand of Abu Bakr R.A. in the mosque after both the leaders praised each other (al-Munajjid, 2014). Ali R.A. helped him throughout his Khilafat. He was also very



active during the time of Umar R.A. and also married his daughter, Umm-i-Kulthum to him. He was among the panel of six persons who had to select the Khalifa amongst them after Hazrat Umar (R.A.). He also remained a member of Shura in the caliphate of Uthman R.A.

Conspiracies in the last few years of Uthman R.A.'s caliphate resulted in his assassination and a fitan that transferred over the era of Ali R.A. as caliph. The insurgents' shameful act of assassination of the Khalifa could never have been imagined by Ali R.A. or any other eminent Companion at Medina. It came as a total surprise to Ali (R.A.) whose two sons, Hassan and Husain (R.A.) were guarding the gate of Uthman's residence. The insurgents after climbing the back wall of the residence had assassinated the Khalifa. The assassination of Uthman R.A. was really due to the creation of faction among the Muslim community which was the goal of 'Abdullah Bin Saba and his followers (the insurgents), and they achieved it. After the assassination of Uthman, the insurgents virtually controlled the capital, Medina, for several days. The Muslims were frightened and sat behind closed doors. After the assassination of Uthman (R.A.) an unprecedented calamity had fallen on the Muslims and for three days, Medina was without any government. Afterwards, the insurgents approached Ali (R.A.) to be the Khalifa. Ali R.A. did not accept this offer initially but upon insistence from people of Madina, he accepted to be the Caliph (Nadvi, 1991, p. 228).

"As soon as 'Ali R.A., may Allah be pleased with him, was made caliph, he delivered a keynote address. He started off by reminding Muslims of the Glorious Qur'an which Allah revealed to guide man to the right path. He next called on them to do good and forsake evil. He also told them to fulfill Allah's Obligations and to preserve His sanctities, on top of which is the sanctity of a Muslim's life. 'Ali R.A. hence publicly declared his views regarding any act of aggression against a Muslim, be it a caliph or otherwise. In his address, he also highlighted points of strength in the Muslim nation and urged them to strive for the sake of Almighty Allah, fear Him and abide by His Commands so as to win His handsome reward" (Muhammad & Al-Yazid, 2001, p. 352).

Later on in his era, Ali R.A. faced numerous problems with regards to assassination of Ali and punishment of those who committed this act.

Ali R.A. moved the capital to Kufa. Sheikh Syed Abul Hasan Nadvi explains various wisdoms behind this. One of the wisdoms was to clean Madina, the beloved city of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, from all fitan that were happening at that time (Nadvi, 1991, p. 237). Utadh Aqqad explains that the wisdom behind this was to ensure that Islamic capital is positioned at such a strategic geographical location which is the meeting point of various nations and which is the mutual trades' passage for Hind, Persia, Yemen, Iraq and Syria. Kufa was also flourishing in knowledge at that time and had the right qualities to be made the capital of Islamic Ummah.

Khwarij came out with strength in the Ali R.A.'s time as well. 12000 men from the army of Ali R.A. "separated" themselves and got called as "Khwarij". The basis of their separation was incorrect understanding and misinterpretation of religion. Learned companions discussed matters with them and some of them repented whereas others chose to remain firm on their ignorance and juhl. Once a man from the Khwarij interrupted Ali R.A. in his Khutbah and said that he had done shirk. Listening to this, other people from Khwarij also started shouting "La Hukmu Illa Billah" (No order except Allah's). Ali R.A. responded to it with very deep words saying that "These words are haq but the

intent and interpretation of those who are saying it is not". This is indeed a matter to ponder and reflect for khwarij of our times as well who misinterpret the religion and cause harm unjustly.

Khwarij went to extreme in their views and even declared Ali R.A. as a kafir, Naoozu billah. The other group that grieved Ali R.A. were the sabaiyyah which went to the other extreme and raised Ali R.A. to a status that neither he claimed nor it was given to him by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has explained these two groups at length in his book Al-Murtaza.

## DEATH

The dissenters had set out to assassinate Ali, Mu'awiyah and Amr bin Al Aas. One night, one of the conspirators, Abdur-Rahman bin Muljim came into the mosque in Kufar and hid in it, aware that Ali would be offering his fajr prayers in the morning. As he began to pray, Abdur-Rahman came forward and stabbed him several times with a dagger, penetrating on the brain through the scar of an old wound. After he was found lying wounded on the prayer mat, Ali said to his son: "Treat the man kindly and give him food and water. If I die, his life is left to justice, and he shall be slain for the deed he had done; but do not mutilate him, for that was forbidden by the Prophet ﷺ.

"From the miracle of prophethood was that the Prophet ﷺ described to him the way Ali's martyrdom would occur. Ammar bin Yasir reported that the Prophet ﷺ said to Ali" "The most wretched of men are two: the people of Thamud who killed the camel and the one who would strike you over here (i.e. on the head) until your beard is wet with your blood."

On Friday, 20 Ramadan, 40 Hijri, Ali passed away. He was sixty-three. Ali had always asked Allah that he die as a martyr for the cause of Islam and Allah accepted his prayers.

May Allah bestow His mercy on Ali for his full dedication to the welfare of Islam and the Muslims

## CONCLUSION:

Ali R.A. is undoubtedly one of most noble companions of the blessed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ whose services for Islam and Prophet Muhammad are engrained in each and every stage of his life. He belonged to the family of nobles and his offsprings bring nothing but nobility to this ummah. His knowledge, Zuhd, Taqwa, humility, brevity, modesty, mercy and nobility are some of his innumerable virtues that serve as a model for all the humanity for all the times to come.

## NOTES:

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- i Musnad Ahmad (3/3) No. 11012, Sunan Tirmidhi (5/656) No. 3768, Mustadrak al-Haakim (3/182) No. 4778. Some reports also suggest that Muhsin to be among his offsprings (Nadwi, 1991).
- ii Sahih Muslim, Book 44, Hadith 47. Retrieved on 2/9/16 from: <http://sunnah.com/muslim/44>
- iii Sahih Muslim, Book 44, Hadith No. 50
- iv Sahih Muslim, Book 44, Hadith No. 52
- v Sahih Muslim, Book 44, Hadith No. 59. This incident is also reported in Sahih Bukhari Book 62, Hadith 54 and Sahih Bukhari, Book 78, Hadith 228
- vi Sahih Muslim, Book 44, Hadith No. 91
- vii Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 21, Hadith 121
- viii Sunan Nasa'i, Book 47, Hadith 38; Grade Sahih
- ix Tadreeb arRawi, 1/456 and Fath ul Mughees, 1/268
- x Ibn Abi Hatim , Al Jarh wa Ta'deel, 2/31, Ibn Rajab , Shark Hal Tirmizi, 1/73
- xi Tadreeb ur Rawi 1/350
- xii Saheeh al-Jami al Sagheer 3182
- xiii Reported from Imam Bukhari and mentioned in Bulugh ul Maraam (English), Book 9, Hadith 1204
- xiv Tareekh al-yaqoobi, 2/228; an-Nateejah wal-Ishraf, p.82
- xv As Sulami: Khilafat Ali Ibn Abi Talib wa Tarteef Wa Tahdeeb, Kitab Al Bidayah Wan-Nihayah, p.22
- xvi Jila ul Ayun, p. 122-123, Bihar al Anwar , Vol. 10, p. 37-38 (A similar tradition is present in Amali of Shaikh Tusi, Vol. 1, p. 38 with slight difference)
- xvii Manaqib, by Khwarizmi, p. 252-253, Kashaful Ghumma, Vol. 1, p. 485, Bihar al Anwar, Vol. 10, p. 40
- xviii Amali, by Tusi, Vol. 1 , p. 40
- xix Al-Isabah, 1/133
- xx Al bidaya wa alnihaya Vol. 7, p. 193
- xxi Al awaasim min al qawasim, pg 82; Al Ansab, wal Ashraf, Vol. 5, p. 103
- xxii Al-Mas'ûdî, Abul-Hasan `Alî Ibnul-Husayn Al-Mas'ûdî (d. 345/956), Murûj Adh-Dhahab wa Ma`âdin Al-Jawhar, vol 2, page 344]

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